

IF IT'S NEWS, IT'S IN THE BEE.  
FOR THE BEE IS A NEWSPAPER.



Congressional Library.

Washington's Best and Lead-  
ing Negro Newspaper That's  
THE BEE

WOL. XXXII NO 38

WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY FEBRUARY 24, 1912

## THE PEONAGE SYSTEM VINDICATED AT LAST GIVEN A KNOCK-OUT BLOW BY THE TAFT ADMINISTRATION

Attorney General Wickersham's Activity in Prosecuting  
Peonage

### SUPREME COURT'S DECISION IN BAILEY CASE A TRIUMPH FOR FREEDOM

Colored citizens generally are very often heard to complain bitterly that the federal government does not enforce the war amendments of the constitution. Much that the federal government does in this respect very often goes unnoticed. Undoubtedly the most important of these amendments, if any one of them may be said to be more important than another, is the Thirteenth Amendment, which abolished slavery and which was intended to secure to every man the right to individual liberty and freedom from servitude of any kind except as a punishment for crime whereof he has been duly convicted.

The Attorney General has not only been active in the prosecution of the trusts, but a great deal of time and attention have been given to the enforcement of peonage statutes and laws enacted by Congress to make more effective the provisions of the Thirteenth Amendment.

The decision of the Supreme Court in the *Alonzo Bailey* case, rendered last term by Mr. Justice Hughes, holding unconstitutional the State law of Alabama under which Bailey was held as a peon, in which Attorney General Wickersham and Assistant Attorney General Harr appeared as *Amicus Curiae*, was a distinct triumph for the cause of freedom. It should be remembered that it was not the official duty of the Attorney General to appear in this case, his act was wholly voluntary in the interest of the enforcement of the Thirteenth Amendment and the peonage statutes.

The report of the Attorney General for 1911, gives two pages to the subject of the enforcement of the peonage statutes. The report says:

"The vigorous enforcement of the statutes against peonage, conducted by the department in the last few years, it is believed has done much toward stamping out that form of involuntary servitude in many districts, but in some of the Southern States this practice appears to be still quite extensively carried on. Prosecutions under the peonage statutes have been instituted in nearly all the Southern States, and in a few States not in the South."

The report also recommends that—"The statutes of the United States upon the subject of peonage and slavery should be amended so as to render them more effective for the protection of persons against slavery and involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime."

Here, it would seem, is a large field for the workers of the race to secure from Congress laws necessary to render more effective the Thirteenth Amendment, and thus make more secure the lives and liberty of their brethren in the South.

The records will show that prosecutions of persons for violating the peonage statutes have been instituted in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, West Virginia, Tennessee, Texas, and other States. Convictions have resulted in Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia, with prosecutions still pending in Kentucky, Louisiana and Texas. In a number of cases prison sentences have been imposed against men of wealth and standing in addition to being sentenced to pay heavy fines. The local assistance of attorneys have had the assistance of special agents of the Department of Justice and the assistance of special attorneys in the prosecution of these cases. Great credit should be given them for the courage and vigor with which they have tried to enforce laws under circumstances where juries might be expected to be slow to convict.

Federal Judges, notably Judge Emory Speer, of Georgia, and Judge Thomas Jones, of Alabama, have been most outspoken and courageous in their charges to the grand juries considering these cases, in their respective districts. A few more years of this kind of campaign, with the assistance of Congress, ought to result in stamping out peonage and involuntary servitude of all kinds.

It will be recalled that just after the war the Southern States passed a great many black laws for the purpose of re-enslaving the Negro, all of which they were required to strike from their statutes before re-admission into the Union, or rather into participation in the national government.

Various devices have been used since to accomplish the same result; such devices as "vagrancy laws," "landlord and tenant laws," "false pretenses," the "claim of indebtedness," etc., many a man has been held as a virtual slave in the turpentine camps and contractors' stockades by coercion and brute force. One of the methods used if a person desires the services of a laborer who has broken

his contract or been guilty of other misdemeanor, is to swear out a warrant, take the prisoner before a justice of the peace, go surety on his bail bond, then take the man to his farm or plantation and compel him to labor. Sometimes the case is then dropped, or if it is prosecuted, a fine is paid, the person desiring to hold the laborer in his service will pay his fine and compel him to work out the fine. One of the methods used is to have a man confess to the commission of a crime and sign a criminal court contract whereby he undertakes to work out the fine for the person who pays it. This person is called the confessor.

At the July term of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Alabama, 21 indictments were returned against 26 defendants for holding nine different persons as peons and slaves. These indictments are still pending. In one case a man was convicted of petty larceny in the State court, fined \$15 and costs, judgment and all amounting to \$43.75. One John Doe, a stranger, came into court under the State laws and confessed judgment for the defendant and paid the fine and costs. Thereupon the defendant entered into what is called a criminal contract to work out this amount at \$6 a month. The defendant ran away after working one month. He was rearrested on an affidavit by John Doe, fined one cent and \$87.05 costs. Then another stranger, Richard Roe, confessed judgment, another contract is entered into by which the defendant in the State court agrees to work 14 months and 15 days at the rate of \$6 a month. A little later the defendant ran away again, was rearrested, and this time fined \$300 and \$112.80 costs, making \$412.80, and sentenced to hard labor for more than a year.

The criminal contract and the confessor device will probably be tested ultimately in the court of last resort by the Department.

There was another case of old-fashioned slavery where a man was working on a steamboat plying up and down the Alabama River. Three persons took him off the boat, carried him to their plantation and forced him to go to work. This man refused to work, was cruelly beaten and whipped, and when he was unable to work, was told to go. He was afterwards arrested on a charge made by the kidnappers of carrying concealed weapons, and fined \$53.85 costs, judgment confessed upon him, and he was taken away into slavery again to work it out at \$10 a month.

White men as well as colored men have been held in peonage, indeed one of the peons named in one of the indictments above referred to, is a white man. The Harlan and Gallagher cases decided at the December term of the Supreme Court, 1910, were cases in which white men were held as peons in the lumber camps of Florida under "a most atrocious system of enforced labor."

While these State laws making possible peonage, are made with special reference to compelling the labor of the Negro, they occasionally catch white men as well, particularly immigrants working under contract as in the Harlan case, all of which goes to show that the liberty of no man is safe as long as the humblest black man may be held as a peon or a slave. The systematic and thorough work undertaken by the Department of Justice as far as the federal laws warrant it, to stamp out peonage, slavery, and involuntary servitude of all kinds, should appeal to the liberty loving people of color the country over, and appeals should be made to Congress for laws to make this work more effective. Appeals should be made, also, to the public sentiment of the States themselves where this system prevails.

#### Richards Literary.

The Richards Literary Club met on Thursday at the residence of Miss Clotilde Houston, 1444 Corcoran St. The subject, Michelangelo's Masterpieces, was rendered by Miss Maude G. Daniels. Mr. Geo. A. Parker made his debut before the club via a solo, which furnished abundant pleasure to the entire club. Mr. Pinkett, the president, announced his departure for the South American cruise with Secretary of State, Mr. Knox. During Mr. Pinkett's absence, Miss H. S. Brown, the vice president, will preside. The club will be entertained at its next meeting by Miss Helen J. Moore, at her residence, 1834 13th St. N. W. After the rendition of the evening's program, Miss Houston laid covers for a delicious repast.

Mr. Justice Wendall Phillips Stafford will introduce Dr. Shepard March 26.

#### THE BRILLIANT YOUNG PROFESSOR VINDICATED.

Dr. Thirkield Does Justice to an Injured Teacher—Friends Jubilant and Enemies Disappointed.

Prof. Thomas M. Gregory, son of Prof. James M. and Mrs. Fannie M. Gregory, who resigned a professorship about a year ago, on account of the treachery and deception of false friends, has been reinstated to his former position as teacher in the University. It will be remembered that about a year ago some envious person sent an anonymous letter to the President of Howard University, Dr. Thirkield, that Prof. Gregory had been guilty of conduct unbecoming a teacher, and that his usefulness as such had become impaired. The Bee, at the time, published the so-called evidence in full, which entirely exonerated Prof. Gregory, but as the matter had become public property it was deemed best that he resign. It was the bad advice given by his friends and before the facts had been entirely presented to the authorities of the University that the resignation of young Gregory was given to Dr. Thirkield and accepted. The Bee has kept in close touch with this case, and knew several months ago that Dr. Thirkield intended to reinstate Prof. Gregory because he was, at the time of his resignation, one of the best teachers in the University. Dr. Thirkield, who at all times is willing to be fair and just, stated that circumstances would no doubt arise to enable him to right the wrong that had been done. The first announcement of the reinstatement of Prof. Gregory is this day made in this issue of The Bee. Those who conspired to injure this young man, in which Dr. Thirkield took no part, will be greatly surprised when they read the reinstatement and vindication. Every effort on the part of young Gregory's enemies has been inaugurated to misrepresent and injure him, and when certain representations had been made to the president and investigated were found to be false and without the slightest foundation. Dr. Thirkield deserves the highest commendation for what he has done, and is doing for the teachers and students of Howard University. He hasn't a mean spirit in his body. He is a father to Howard University and a guardian of the teachers and students. The reinstatement of Prof. Gregory not only meets the highest approval of the people in this city, but the entire country. There is not a more brilliant man to be found than Thomas M. Gregory.

#### HAVE CEASED FIGHTING

Vermont Avenue Church Troubles Ended—Everybody Happy.

The church war at the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church was brought to an end in Equity Court No. 2 by mutual consent of all parties concerned, the case of Hill, et al. vs. Hawkins, et al., Equity No. 30428, was discontinued; the attorneys for plaintiffs being Jabez Lee and Birney Woodard; attorney for defendants, Thomas L. Jones, Ralston, Siddons and Richardson.

Later in the day a reporter of the Washington Bee saw Attorney Jabez Lee at his office, 600 F Street N. W., and he made the following statement:

"We are discontinuing litigation not because we fear defeat nor because we are weakening numerically or financially. We conscientiously felt that victory awaited us at the end. We have a following of a thousand persons, whose financial ratings are anywhere from fifty cents to fifty thousand dollars. At this very moment we have a large unexpended balance in our treasury."

"The sole motive of our actions is to preserve the integrity and usefulness of the Vermont Avenue Baptist Church, and to keep its large membership intact."

"Our differences are to be settled within the four walls of the said church in a peaceful and Christian-like manner. We entertain no hard feelings towards our brethren, and we are disposed to believe that they have none towards us."

"The bonds of friendship between the members have been greatly strained within the last year, but they will be recast and we, as one great army of the living God, under one banner, will march onward to capture the world for Christ."

#### Mrs. Ware Taken Ill.

Richmond, Va., Feb. 19. The 10th Street Church choir is here and is receiving a great ovation. Mrs. Lena Ware, the organist of the 10th Street Church Choir, was taken suddenly ill and it was impossible for her to play at the concert to be held Monday night. Mrs. Ware's services will be greatly missed.

Mrs. Lena Ware arrived in the city from Richmond, Va., Tuesday morning at 9:15, quite ill, and was conveyed immediately to her home at 525 21st street, where she is under the medical care of Dr. Weaver. The Bee has been informed that Mrs. Ware is resting easily, although quite weak.

Don't fail to go and hear Dr. J. E. Shepard, at the Bethel Literary, March 26th.

## JOHNSON VICTORIOUS

STEAM ROLLER IN GEORGIA GOES THROUGH WITHOUT A SQUEAK.

H. S. Jackson Indorsed for National Committeeman—Walter Johnson Thanked, and Henry L. Johnson Praised for His Work for the Party

(From the Atlanta Constitution.)

Greased so thoroughly that not a single squeak was heard while it was merrily rolling through the Georgia Republican convention, the Taft machine took on another crew of passengers booked for Chicago in June to again nominate him yesterday at the meeting of the State G. O. P. From the time that the convention assembled shortly after 1 o'clock in the Orpheum theater, until it adjourned a little after 5 P. M., the name of the favorite son of Ohio was greeted with tumultuous applause every time it was mentioned, which was about every two minutes, while the pronouncing of that once magic "Theodore Roosevelt" did not result in enough applause and enthusiasm to wake a delegate from one of the hill counties, who had considered 4 o'clock a proper time for retiring.

The speakers all called the proceedings of the afternoon "a love feast." It was probably all of that, for unanimity of sentiment was never more forcibly expressed. There were a half-score votes taken and there was never a "no" spoken, which is considerable indication of party harmony.

True, some contests were filed against the seating of the Taft delegates from Fulton, Chatham and several other counties. These contests were referred to a committee of credentials and the committee reported back in three shakes of a sheep's tail (commonly considered a most limited period) that the Taft men had won their positions in the convention legally in each and every instance and there was not a Roosevelt voice to protest against the adoption of the report of the committee.

#### Given Timely Warning.

The same business-like methods were employed in each and every other feature of the Taft program. The delegates at large were instructed to vote for Taft first, last and all the time at the Chicago convention.

The district delegates were told in more fancy language, but the meaning was plain that if they did not follow suit they had better not return to Georgia. The Taft administration was glorified to the high heavens. Henry S. Jackson, of Atlanta, was recommended for national committeeman. Walter H. Johnson was thanked for his services as State chairman. Henry Lincoln Johnson was told in resolutions practically that he was fully deserving of his middle name. C. P. Goree, H. S. Jackson, H. L. Johnson and C. J. Davis, of Dawson, were named delegates at large, all staunch and true Taft adherents. William Driscoll, of Atlanta; R. R. Wright, of Savannah; Dr. E. J. Turner, of Columbus, and W. H. Harris, of Athens, were elected alternates. All ditto. And the convention adjourned.

The "love feast" began when the delegates were seated or standing as the physical condition and tendencies of each person suggested. The convention, numerically, seemed about 60 per cent Afro-American in its make-up and that relative importance was preserved throughout the session. A. M. Tomlin, of Floyd county, was made temporary chairman, and the harmonics began.

#### Mr. Blun Retires.

It was announced that for the sake of party harmony and the glorification of William Howard Taft, Henry Blun, postmaster of Savannah, had patriotically retired from the contest for national committeeman, leaving the field open to Henry S. Jackson, collector of internal revenue at Atlanta.

No sooner had this been done than Walter Johnson, in the interest of party harmony and the glorification of William Howard Taft, stepped out of the race for delegate-at-large with considerable grace in favor of C. P. Goree, of Atlanta. (Loud cheers for Goree and brief speech from same, both being to the glorification of same W. H. T.)

The aforementioned committee on credentials was then named, and, while it retired back of the stage, just like the villain does when the old man is taking out the papers, oratory burst forth. Speaker after speaker was called on, noisily perhaps, but in perfect harmony. A few who were not called on made speeches from the aisles while the regular orators were being conducted to the stage.

Most of the orators were of colored persuasion and preachers by profession. Rev. J. J. Bush said that preachers should be for everything good, and therefore he was for W. H. T. (Loud cheers and a few hurrahs for W. H. T.) Dr. C. T. Walker, of Augusta, was introduced as the preacher at whose church W. H. T. worshiped when not playing golf at Augusta. (Cheers for W. H. T.) The Rev. Walker, taking "Harmony" for a subject, preached a good, old-fashioned sermon, with "Faith, hope and love" for a text.

The next orator was Ike Woods, of Forsyth. Ike was diminutive in stature, loud of voice and black as the ace of spades. He looked so much like John Healey, an eminent comedian of Mr. Al Fields' organization, that the dusky delegates howled ap-

proval and laughed merry "Ya yas." They were to an extent disappointed when Ike made a lengthy plea for all the delegates to see that their home people qualified themselves as voters by registering.

#### Denounced Legislators.

The first white man to mount the stage after the speaking began was Roscoe Pickens, of Pickens county, a representative in the legislature, and he was the first person to broach the race question. He told of the sovereign service he had rendered the Negroes by fruitlessly endeavoring to have a legislative investigation of a lynching and denounced the white law-makers for failing to aid him. He also paid high personal and political tribute to his colored brothers, and said that with their aid he could make a fine living without the aid of any Democrat.

So thoroughly in the spirit of the universal brotherhood of man was his address that an enthusiastic but intensely charcoal-colored delegate moved that he be given the "Chauntiqua salute," an expression of approval rarely seen in political gatherings. Whether there were not enough handkerchiefs in the convention to make a respectable "salute," whether the delegates did not know the nature of the greeting, or whether they didn't care about doing it, will never be known. It wasn't given, anyhow.

After repeated calls, Judson W. Lyons took the stage and spoke briefly on the value of being an American citizen, and urged the delegates to see that their constituents register in order to make them such.

#### Wants Jobs for Whites.

The committee on credentials then reported its well greased report and the convention proceeded to permanent organization. Henry Lincoln Johnson was elected permanent chairman without a scintilla of opposition. He spoke forcefully for about ten minutes, saying that the Republican party of Georgia is seeking to liberate the White people of Georgia from political thralldom. When it does this, he said, it will have done a greater work than Lincoln did when he liberated the Negroes from personal thralldom. He longed to see the time, he said, when every position of leadership in the Republican party of Georgia will be held by a white man, for under those conditions he believed every man would have an equal chance.

This speech, having been culminated with the usual Taft tribute (more cheers) the party machinery went to work. Committees were named on platform and permanent organization. (Business of retiring back of stage.)

While the convention awaited these reports, the Rev. Jack Thornton, an ante-bellum Negro of Thomasville, was called on to speak and made an impression. He told of the services he had rendered "his white folks" during the war, and intimated that the white folks had not paid him back politically.

#### A Habit of the Whites.

His talk was in quaint Uncle Remus dialect, and when he proclaimed: "When yer meets one uv yer white folks way up north, he's glad ter see yer, but he sez 'How is yer—yer dam of rascallion?' Dat's de white folks' way. Dey got it from Noah. When Noah got mad and drunk, he cussed de fust nigger and ever since den ever time a white man gets mad er drunk he's jist bound ter cuss a nigger. He doan mean nutthin'. He jist can't help it."

The committees being ready to report, his speech was thus pleasantly concluded, and the machinery again started grinding.

O. P. Morton Woman's Relief Corps. Sunday night O. P. Morton W. R. C. was the guest of Circle No. 1, First Baptist Church of Georgetown, D. C. Rev. Edgar Ricks, pastor.

Promptly at 8 o'clock, Mrs. Elizer B. Davis, president, with her staff and past rank officers and corps, passed down the aisles of this beautiful little church. The color bearers, each robed in spotless white, bearing silk flags, was the escort of the president. Rev. Ricks was at his best. His theme was "A Good Woman." He paid a glowing tribute to womanhood, bringing out many worthy historical facts, and particularly those in which Negro women played a prominent part. The choir, under Prof. Walker, had a most excellent and well rendered patriotic musical program. After the sermon, Maj. Chas. R. Douglass, commander of Douglass Post, made some encouraging remarks, bearing on the pioneer and most excellent work of the corps. It being the oldest by five years of all the corps in the Department of the Potomac. Miss Marie L. Jordan, in her happy manner, followed, and gave more statistics, outlined the work, paid a high tribute to Negro soldiers and of the excellent work of this corps. Mrs. Julia Mason Layton, in a pleasing vein outlined the work of the order, showing that the National W. R. C. had a membership of over 160,000 loyal women. Had collected during the past year \$6,945.00, and had expended \$6,405.95, and had now in treasury \$13,630.05. She introduced the president and her staff, then all past officers, giving their rank and special qualifications. Miss A. L. Thompkins, one of the foremost workers in this good old corps, told of the excellent work of Mrs. Layton, stating that she was "law authority of the W. R. C. of this city."

A splendid collection was taken, and all went home feeling that it means much to be identified with the Grand Army organizations.

## PARAGRAPHIC NEWS

Important News Happenings of the Week

### DEVOTED TO GENERAL INTEREST

(By Miss G. B. Maxfield.)

Fifty-one years ago Sunday Jefferson Davis was inaugurated president of the Confederate States of America, at Montgomery, Ala.

Patriotic exercises commemorating of Washington's birthday was observed in all of the public schools in the city Wednesday. Patriotic addresses were delivered during the exercises.

Under the direction of the woman's Interdenominational Union, 450 unconverted Chinamen are taught the Bible by Rio de Siew, the new missionary evangelist of their own race.

An effort to increase interest in bands of mercy in the graded schools is being made by Miss Mary Harrold, of the Humane Society. In January there were 36,735 children members of the band. The organization aims to teach the children to treat dumb creatures with kindness.

There are now five separate expeditions on trips of discovery en route to the South Pole. A message of victory may flash over cables and telegraph wires any time.

Excavation work on the foundation of the new Bureau of Engraving and Printing at the foot of 14th Street Southwest, is progressing rapidly now; the heavy ice prevented the work during January.

The band of forty Australian boys sent to this country by the Australian government to learn at first hand about Americans and American institutions, were met at the Union Station by a committee from the Chamber of Commerce.

Chentz T. Wang, who is expected to be appointed Minister to the United States, to represent China, the newest of the world's republics, is well known here, both in diplomatic and educational circles.

Preparations are being made for a national exhibition in connection with the fifteenth international congress on hygiene and democracy, which will be held here during the last three weeks in September.

The Philippians painting, depicting the far-famed "Picket's Charge," is now in this city, and through the courtesy of Secretary Fisher, it is now on exhibition at the Patent Office. It is said the picture is the most realistic portrayal of the battle of Gettysburg ever made.

The Rev. Abraham Lazarus has written municipal Judge Sabath, of Chicago, advocating selection of judges who can speak at least seventy languages, and thus do away with unreliable interpreters.

An official report has been received of a severe fight between the revolutionary forces and the government troops at Cape Haitien, Haiti.

Prof. Albert Hertel, the noted painter of landscape and still life, died last week in his sixty-ninth year.

The Charities and Corrections Committee embodied recommendations giving their approval to the continuance of government aid for the Columbia and Emergency hospitals, and also urging the appropriation of \$200,000 for the construction of a municipal hospital.

A novel feature of the celebration of Washington's birthday dinner given in New York at the Waldorf, was, several women were among the speakers.

A delegation of 1,000 Chinese American residents, called on President Taft to urge the immediate recognition of the republic of China by the United States.

More than three thousand persons began saving for Christmas at the Merchants' and Mechanics' Saving Bank in this city.

Confederate veterans are to have a prominent part in the celebration of the fifth anniversary of the battle of Gettysburg.

#### THE ODD FELLOWS.

##### Report of Hall Association.

The Odd Fellows' Hall Association, of which Mr. Thomas H. Wright is president, has made its report to the association.

Total amount of receipts for the year amounted to \$6,067.58. Total receipts from all sources, including balance from 1910, \$7,863.24. Amount expended, \$5,757.74. Balance on hand Dec. 31, 1911, \$2,105.50.

The report shows the honesty and integrity of the men who are at the head of the hall association.

The auditing committee consisted of J. R. F. Brown, R. F. Williams and A. S. Howard. Officers of the hall association are: Thomas H. Wright, president; Lawrence Clark, vice-president; Samuel W. Watson, secretary; Alex. F. Hicks, assistant secretary; Joseph Manning, treasurer.

For twenty-two years of opposition, abuse and other meanness this association has had to encounter, Mr. Wright, who is known for his honesty and integrity, has battled for the success of this institution, and today his efforts have been crowned with glory. Thomas H. Wright deserves to be given a public testimonial by the Odd Fellow friends and others for the honest manner with which he has conducted this institution. For twenty-two years Mr. Wright has done all in his power to build up an association which is a monument to the world.